110TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

S. 278

To establish a program and criteria for National Heritage Areas in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

January 12, 2007

Mr. Thomas introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To establish a program and criteria for National Heritage Areas in the United States, and for other purposes.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
- 3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.
- 4 (a) Short Title.—This Act may be cited as the
- 5 "National Heritage Areas Partnership Act".
- 6 (b) Table of Contents.—The table of contents of
- 7 this Act is as follows:
 - Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
 - Sec. 2. Purposes.
 - Sec. 3. Definitions.
 - Sec. 4. National Heritage Areas system.
 - Sec. 5. Studies.
 - Sec. 6. Designation of National Heritage Areas.
 - Sec. 7. Management plans.

- Sec. 8. Local coordinating entities.
- Sec. 9. Relationship to other Federal agencies.
- Sec. 10. Private property and regulatory protections.
- Sec. 11. Partnership support.
- Sec. 12. Authorization of appropriations.

1 SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

- 2 The purposes of this Act are—
- 3 (1) to promote public understanding, apprecia-
- 4 tion, and enjoyment of many places, events and peo-
- 5 ple that have contributed to the story of the United
- 6 States;
- 7 (2) to promote innovative and partnership-driv-
- 8 en management strategies that recognize regional
- 9 values, encourage locally tailored resource steward-
- ship and interpretation, and provide for the effective
- leveraging of Federal funds with other local, State,
- and private funding sources;
- 13 (3) to unify national standards and processes
- for conducting feasibility studies, designating a sys-
- tem of National Heritage Areas, and approving
- management plans for National Heritage Areas;
- 17 (4) to provide appropriate linkages between
- units of the National Park System and communities,
- 19 governments, and organizations within National
- 20 Heritage Areas; and
- 21 (5) to provide financial and technical assistance
- 22 to National Heritage Area local coordinating entities
- 23 that act as a catalyst for diverse regions, commu-

1	nities, organizations, and citizens to undertake
2	projects and programs for collaborative resource
3	stewardship and interpretation.
4	SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.
5	In this Act:
6	(1) Local coordinating entity.—The term
7	"local coordinating entity" means the entity des
8	ignated by Congress—
9	(A) to develop, in partnership with others
10	the management plan for a National Heritage
11	Area; and
12	(B) to act as a catalyst for the implemen
13	tation of projects and programs among diverse
14	partners in the National Heritage Area.
15	(2) Management plan.—The term "manage
16	ment plan" means the plan prepared by the local co
17	ordinating entity for a National Heritage Area des
18	ignated by Congress that specifies actions, policies
19	strategies, performance goals, and recommendations
20	to meet the goals of the National Heritage Area, in
21	accordance with section 7.
22	(3) National Heritage area.—The term
23	"National Heritage Area" means an area designated

by Congress that is nationally important to the her-

1	itage of the United States and meets the criteria es-
2	tablished under section 5(a).
3	(4) National importance.—The term "na-
4	tional importance" means possession of—
5	(A) unique natural, historical, cultural,
6	educational, scenic, or recreational resources of
7	exceptional value or quality; and
8	(B) a high degree of integrity of location,
9	setting, or association in illustrating or inter-
10	preting the heritage of the United States.
11	(5) Proposed national heritage area.—
12	The term "proposed National Heritage Area" means
13	an area under study by the Secretary or other par-
14	ties for potential designation by Congress as a Na-
15	tional Heritage Area.
16	(6) Secretary.—The term "Secretary" means
17	the Secretary of the Interior.
18	(7) Study.—The term "study" means a study
19	conducted by the Secretary, or conducted by 1 or
20	more other interested parties and reviewed by the
21	Secretary, in accordance with the criteria and proc-
22	esses established under section 5, to determine
23	whether an area meets the criteria to be designated

as a National Heritage Area by Congress.

1	(8) System.—The term "system" means the
2	system of National Heritage Areas established under
3	section 4(a).
4	SEC. 4. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS SYSTEM.
5	(a) In General.—In order to recognize certain
6	areas of the United States that tell nationally important
7	stories and to protect, enhance, and interpret the natural
8	historic, scenic, and cultural resources of the areas that
9	together illustrate significant aspects of the heritage of the
10	United States, there is established a system of National
11	Heritage Areas through which the Secretary shall provide
12	technical and financial assistance to local coordinating en-
13	tities to support the establishment, development, and con-
14	tinuity of the National Heritage Areas.
15	(b) System.—The system of National Heritage
16	Areas shall be composed of—
17	(1) National Heritage Areas established by
18	Congress before or on the date of enactment of this
19	Act; and
20	(2) National Heritage Areas established by
21	Congress after the date of enactment of this Act, as
22	provided for in this Act.
23	(c) Relationship to the National Park Sys-
24	TEM.—

1	(1) RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL PARK
2	UNITS.—The Secretary shall—
3	(A) ensure, to the maximum extent prac-
4	ticable, participation and assistance by units of
5	the National Park System located near or en-
6	compassed by National Heritage Areas in local
7	initiatives for National Heritage Areas that
8	conserve and interpret resources consistent with
9	an approved management plan; and
10	(B) work with National Heritage Areas to
11	promote public enjoyment of units of the Na-
12	tional Park System and park-related resources.
13	(2) Applicability of Laws.—National Herit-
14	age Areas shall not be—
15	(A) considered to be units of the National
16	Park System; or
17	(B) subject to the laws applicable to units
18	of the National Park System.
19	(d) Duties.—Under the system, the Secretary
20	shall—
21	(1)(A) conduct studies, as directed by Congress,
22	to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating
23	proposed National Heritage Areas; or
24	(B) review and comment on studies undertaken
25	by other parties to make such assessment;

- 1 (2) provide technical and financial assistance, 2 on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis (as de-3 termined by the Secretary), for the development and 4 implementation of management plans for designated 5 National Heritage Areas;
 - (3) enter into cooperative agreements with interested parties to carry out this Act;
 - (4) provide information, promote understanding, and encourage research on National Heritage Areas in partnership with local coordinating entities;
 - (5) provide national oversight, analysis, coordination, and technical and financial assistance and support to ensure consistency and accountability under the system;
 - (6) submit annually to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report describing the allocation and expenditure of funds for activities conducted with respect to National Heritage Areas under this Act; and
 - (7)(A) conduct an evaluation and prepare a report on the accomplishments, sustainability, and recommendations for the future of each designated Na-

1	tional Heritage Area 3 years before cessation of
2	Federal funding for the area under section 12; and
3	(B) submit a report on the findings of the eval-
4	uation to the Committee on Resources of the House
5	of Representatives and the Committee on Energy
6	and Natural Resources of the Senate.
7	SEC. 5. STUDIES.
8	(a) Criteria.—In conducting or reviewing a study,
9	the Secretary shall apply the following criteria to deter-
10	mine the suitability and feasibility of designating a pro-
11	posed National Heritage Area:
12	(1) An area—
13	(A) has an assemblage of natural, historic,
14	cultural, educational, scenic, or recreational re-
15	sources that together are nationally important
16	to the heritage of the United States;
17	(B) represents distinctive aspects of the
18	heritage of the United States worthy of recogni-
19	tion, conservation, interpretation, and con-
20	tinuing use;
21	(C) is best managed as such an assemblage
22	through partnerships among public and private
23	entities at the local or regional level;

1	(D) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs,
2	and folklife that are a valuable part of the her-
3	itage of the United States;
4	(E) provides outstanding opportunities to
5	conserve natural, historical, cultural, or scenic
6	features;
7	(F) provides outstanding recreational or
8	educational opportunities; and
9	(G) has resources and traditional uses that
10	have national importance.
11	(2) Residents, business interests, nonprofit or-
12	ganizations, and governments (including relevant
13	Federal land management agencies) within the pro-
14	posed area are involved in the planning and have
15	demonstrated significant support through letters and
16	other means for National Heritage Area designation
17	and management.
18	(3) The local coordinating entity responsible for
19	preparing and implementing the management plan is
20	identified.
21	(4) The proposed local coordinating entity and
22	units of government supporting the designation are
23	willing and have documented a significant commit-

ment to work in partnership to protect, enhance, in-

- terpret, fund, manage, and develop resources within
 the National Heritage Area.
- 3 (5) The proposed local coordinating entity has 4 developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines 5 the roles of all participants (including the Federal 6 Government) in the management of the National 7 Heritage Area.
- 8 (6) The proposal is consistent with continued 9 economic activity within the area.
- 10 (7) A conceptual boundary map has been devel-11 oped and is supported by the public and partici-12 pating Federal agencies.
- 13 (b) Consultation.—In conducting or reviewing a 14 study, the Secretary shall consult with the managers of 15 any Federal land within the proposed National Heritage 16 Area and secure the concurrence of the managers with the 17 findings of the study before making a determination for
- (c) APPROVAL.—On completion or receipt of a studyfor a National Heritage Area, the Secretary shall—
- 21 (1) review, comment on, and determine if the 22 study meets the criteria specified in subsection (a) 23 for designation as a National Heritage Area;

designation.

1	(2) consult with the Governor of each State in
2	which the proposed National Heritage Area is lo-
3	cated; and
4	(3) transmit to the Committee on Resources of
5	the House of Representatives and the Committee on
6	Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, the
7	study, including—
8	(A) any comments received from the Gov-
9	ernor of each State in which the proposed Na-
10	tional Heritage Area is located; and
11	(B) a finding as to whether the proposed
12	National Heritage Area meets the criteria for
13	designation.
14	(d) DISAPPROVAL.—If the Secretary determines that
15	any proposed National Heritage Area does not meet the
16	criteria for designation, the Secretary shall include within
17	the study submitted under subsection $(c)(3)$ a description
18	of the reasons for the determination.
19	SEC. 6. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS.
20	(a) In General.—The designation of a National
21	Heritage Area shall be—
22	(1) by Act of Congress; and
23	(2) contingent on the prior completion of a
24	study and an affirmative determination by the Sec-

- retary that the area meets the criteria established under section 5(a).
- 4 Heritage Area designated under subsection (a) shall be a

(b) Component of the System.—Any National

5 component of the system.

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6 SEC. 7. MANAGEMENT PLANS.

- 7 (a) REQUIREMENTS.—The management plan for any
- 8 National Heritage Area shall—
- 9 (1) describe comprehensive policies, goals, strat-10 egies, and recommendations for telling the story of
- 11 the heritage of the area covered by the National
- Heritage Area and encouraging long-term resource
- protection, enhancement, interpretation, funding,
- management, and development of the National Her-
- 15 itage Area;
- 16 (2) include a description of actions and commit-
- ments that governments, private organizations, and
- citizens will take to protect, enhance, interpret, fund,
- manage, and develop the natural, historical, cultural,
- 20 educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the
- 21 National Heritage Area;
- 22 (3) specify existing and potential sources of
- funding or economic development strategies to pro-
- tect, enhance, interpret, fund, manage, and develop
- 25 the National Heritage Area;

1	(4) include an inventory of the natural, histor
2	ical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreationa
3	resources of the National Heritage Area related to
4	the national importance and themes of the Nationa
5	Heritage Area that should be protected, enhanced
6	interpreted, managed, funded, and developed;
7	(5) recommend policies and strategies for re
8	source management, including the development of
9	intergovernmental and interagency agreements to
10	protect, enhance, interpret, fund, manage, and de
11	velop the natural, historical, cultural, educational
12	scenic, and recreational resources of the Nationa
13	Heritage Area;
14	(6) describe a program for implementation for
15	the management plan, including—
16	(A) performance goals;
17	(B) plans for resource protection, enhance
18	ment, interpretation, funding, management, and
19	development; and
20	(C) specific commitments for implementa
21	tion that have been made by the local coordi
22	nating entity or any government agency, organi
23	zation, business, or individual;
24	(7) include an analysis of, and recommenda

tions for, means by which Federal, State, and local

programs may best be coordinated (including the role of the National Park Service and other Federal agencies associated with the National Heritage Area) to further the purposes of this Act; and

(8) include a business plan that—

- (A) describes the role, operation, financing, and functions of the local coordinating entity and of each of the major activities contained in the management plan; and
- (B) provides adequate assurances that the local coordinating entity has the partnerships and financial and other resources necessary to implement the management plan for the National Heritage Area.

(b) Deadline.—

- (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to develop the management plan after designation as a National Heritage Area, the local coordinating entity shall submit the management plan to the Secretary for approval.
- (2) TERMINATION OF FUNDING.—If the management plan is not submitted to the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (1), the local coordinating entity shall not qualify for any additional fi-

nancial assistance under this Act until such time as the management plan is submitted to and approved by the Secretary.

(c) APPROVAL OF MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

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- (1) REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after receiving the plan, the Secretary shall review and approve or disapprove the management plan for a National Heritage Area on the basis of the criteria established under paragraph (3).
- (2) Consultation.—The Secretary shall consult with the Governor of each State in which the National Heritage Area is located before approving a management plan for the National Heritage Area.
- (3) Criteria for approval.—In determining whether to approve a management plan for a National Heritage Area, the Secretary shall consider whether—
 - (A) the local coordinating entity represents the diverse interests of the National Heritage Area, including governments, natural and historic resource protection organizations, educational institutions, businesses, recreational organizations, community residents, and private property owners;
- (B) the local coordinating entity—

1	(i) has afforded adequate opportunity
2	for public and governmental involvement
3	(including through workshops and hear-
4	ings) in the preparation of the manage-
5	ment plan; and
6	(ii) provides for at least semiannual
7	public meetings to ensure adequate imple-
8	mentation of the management plan;
9	(C) the resource protection, enhancement,
10	interpretation, funding, management, and de-
11	velopment strategies described in the manage-
12	ment plan, if implemented, would adequately
13	protect, enhance, interpret, fund, manage, and
14	develop the natural, historic, cultural, edu-
15	cational, scenic, and recreational resources of
16	the National Heritage Area;
17	(D) the management plan would not ad-
18	versely affect any activities authorized on Fed-
19	eral land under public land laws or land use
20	plans;
21	(E) the local coordinating entity has dem-
22	onstrated the financial capability, in partner-
23	ship with others, to carry out the plan;
24	(F) the Secretary has received adequate
25	assurances from the appropriate State and local

1	officials whose support is needed to ensure the
2	effective implementation of the State and local
3	elements of the management plan; and
4	(G) the management plan demonstrates
5	partnerships among the local coordinating enti-
6	ty, Federal, State, and local governments, re-
7	gional planning organizations, nonprofit organi-
8	zations, or private sector parties for implemen-
9	tation of the management plan.
10	(4) Disapproval.—
11	(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary dis-
12	approves the management plan, the Secretary—
13	(i) shall advise the local coordinating
14	entity in writing of the reasons for the dis-
15	approval; and
16	(ii) may make recommendations to the
17	local coordinating entity for revisions to
18	the management plan.
19	(B) Deadline.—Not later than 180 days
20	after receiving a revised management plan, the
21	Secretary shall approve or disapprove the re-
22	vised management plan.
23	(5) Amendments.—
24	(A) IN GENERAL.—An amendment to the
25	management plan that substantially alters the

1	purposes of the National Heritage Area shall be
2	reviewed by the Secretary and approved or dis-
3	approved in the same manner as the original
4	management plan.
5	(B) Implementation.—The local coordi-
6	nating entity shall not use Federal funds au-
7	thorized by this Act to implement an amend-
8	ment to the management plan until the Sec-
9	retary approves the amendment.
10	SEC. 8. LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITIES.
11	(a) Duties.—To further the purposes of the Na-
12	tional Heritage Area, the local coordinating entity shall—
13	(1) prepare a management plan for the Na-
14	tional Heritage Area, and submit the management
15	plan to the Secretary, in accordance with section 7;
16	(2) submit an annual report to the Secretary
17	for each fiscal year for which the local coordinating
18	entity receives Federal funds under this Act, speci-
19	fying—
20	(A) the specific performance goals and ac-
21	complishments of the local coordinating entity;
22	(B) the expenses and income of the local
23	coordinating entity;
24	(C) the amounts and sources of matching
25	funds;

1	(D) the amounts leveraged with Federal
2	funds and sources of the leveraging; and
3	(E) grants made to any other entities dur-
4	ing the fiscal year;
5	(3) make available for audit for each fiscal year
6	for which the local coordinating entity receives Fed-
7	eral funds under this Act, all information pertaining
8	to the expenditure of the funds and any matching
9	funds; and
10	(4) encourage economic viability and sustain-
11	ability that is consistent with the purposes of the
12	National Heritage Area.
13	(b) Authorities.—For the purposes of preparing
14	and implementing the approved management plan for the
15	National Heritage Area, the local coordinating entity may
16	use Federal funds made available under this Act to—
17	(1) make grants to political jurisdictions, non-
18	profit organizations, and other parties within the
19	National Heritage Area;
20	(2) enter into cooperative agreements with or
21	provide technical assistance to political jurisdictions,
22	nonprofit organizations, Federal agencies, and other
23	interested parties;
24	(3) hire and compensate staff, including individ-
25	uals with expertise in—

1	(A) natural, historical, cultural, edu-
2	cational, scenic, and recreational resource con-
3	servation;
4	(B) economic and community development;
5	and
6	(C) heritage planning;
7	(4) obtain funds or services from any source,
8	including other Federal laws or programs;
9	(5) contract for goods or services; and
10	(6) support activities of partners and any other
11	activities that further the purposes of the National
12	Heritage Area and are consistent with the approved
13	management plan.
14	(c) Prohibition on Acquisition of Real Prop-
15	ERTY.—The local coordinating entity may not use Federal
16	funds authorized under this Act to acquire any interest
17	in real property.
18	SEC. 9. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.
19	(a) In General.—Nothing in this Act affects the au-
20	thority of a Federal agency to provide technical or finan-
21	cial assistance under any other law.
22	(b) Consultation and Coordination.—The head
23	of any Federal agency planning to conduct activities that
24	may have an impact on a National Heritage Area is en-
25	couraged to consult and coordinate the activities with the

1	Secretary and the local coordinating entity to the max-
2	imum extent practicable.
3	(c) Other Federal Agencies.—Nothing in this
4	Act—
5	(1) modifies, alters, or amends any law or regu-
6	lation authorizing a Federal agency to manage Fed-
7	eral land under the jurisdiction of the Federal agen-
8	cy;
9	(2) limits the discretion of a Federal land man-
10	ager to implement an approved land use plan within
11	the boundaries of a National Heritage Area; or
12	(3) modifies, alters, or amends any authorized
13	use of Federal land under the jurisdiction of a Fed-
14	eral agency.
15	SEC. 10. PRIVATE PROPERTY AND REGULATORY PROTEC-
16	TIONS.
17	Nothing in this Act—
18	(1) abridges the rights of any property owner
19	(whether public or private), including the right to re-
20	frain from participating in any plan, project, pro-
21	gram, or activity conducted within the National Her-
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22	itage Area;
23	itage Area; (2) requires any property owner to permit pub-

- owner, or to modify public access or use of property of the property owner under any other Federal,
- 3 State, or local law;
- 4 (3) alters any duly adopted land use regulation, 5 approved land use plan, or other regulatory author-6 ity of any Federal, State or local agency, or conveys 7 any land use or other regulatory authority to any 8 local coordinating entity;
- 9 (4) authorizes or implies the reservation or appropriation of water or water rights;
- 11 (5) diminishes the authority of the State to 12 manage fish and wildlife, including the regulation of 13 fishing and hunting within the National Heritage 14 Area; or
- 15 (6) creates any liability, or affects any liability 16 under any other law, of any private property owner 17 with respect to any person injured on the private 18 property.

19 SEC. 11. PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT.

- 20 (a) Technical Assistance.—On termination of the
- 21 15-year period for which assistance is provided under sec-
- 22 tion 12, the Secretary may, on request of a local coordi-
- 23 nating entity, continue to provide technical assistance to
- 24 a National Heritage Area under section 4.
- 25 (b) Grant Assistance.—

1	(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish
2	a grant program under which the Secretary provides
3	grants, on a competitive basis, to local coordinating
4	entities for the conduct of individual projects at Na-
5	tional Heritage Areas for which financial assistance
6	has terminated under section 12.
7	(2) Conditions.—The provision of a grant
8	under paragraph (1) shall be subject to the condition
9	that—
10	(A) a project must be approved by the
11	local coordinating entity as promoting the pur-
12	poses of the management plan required under
13	section 7;
14	(B) a project may receive only 1 grant of
15	no more than \$250,000 in any 1 fiscal year;
16	(C) a maximum of \$250,000 may be re-
17	ceived by a local coordinating entity for projects
18	funded under this subsection in any 1 fiscal
19	year; and
20	(D) a project shall not be eligible for fund-
21	ing under this section in any fiscal year that a
22	local coordinating entity receives an appropria-
23	tion through the National Park Service (exclud-

ing technical assistance) for the National Herit-

1	age Area at which the project is being con-
2	ducted.
3	(c) Report.—For each fiscal year in which assist-
4	ance is provided under this section, the Secretary shall
5	submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the House
6	of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations
7	of the Senate a list of the projects provided assistance for
8	the fiscal year.
9	SEC. 12. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.
10	(a) Studies.—There is authorized to be appro-
11	priated to conduct and review studies under section 5
12	\$750,000 for each fiscal year, of which not more than
13	\$250,000 for any fiscal year may be used for any indi-
14	vidual study for a proposed National Heritage Area.
15	(b) Local Coordinating Entities.—
16	(1) In general.—There is authorized to be
17	appropriated to carry out section 8 \$25,000,000 for
18	each fiscal year, of which not more than—
19	(A) \$1,000,000 may be made available for
20	any fiscal year for any individual National Her-
21	itage Area, to remain available until expended;
22	and
23	(B) a total of \$10,000,000 may be made
24	available for all such fiscal years for any indi-
25	vidual National Heritage Area.

1	(2) Termination date.—
2	(A) IN GENERAL.—The authority of the
3	Secretary to provide financial assistance to an
4	individual local coordinating entity under this
5	section (excluding technical assistance and ad-
6	ministrative oversight) shall terminate on the
7	date that is 15 years after the date of the ini-
8	tial receipt of the assistance by the local coordi-
9	nating entity.
10	(B) Designation.—A National Heritage
11	Area shall retain the designation as a National
12	Heritage Area after the termination date pre-
13	scribed in subparagraph (A).
14	(3) Administration.—Not more than 5 per-
15	cent of the amount of funds made available under
16	paragraph (1) for a fiscal year may be used by the
17	Secretary for technical assistance, oversight, and ad-
18	ministrative purposes.
19	(c) Heritage Partnership Grant Assistance.—
20	There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary
21	to carry out section 11 $\$5,000,000$ for each fiscal year.
22	(d) Matching Funds.—
23	(1) In general.—As a condition of receiving a

grant under this Act, the recipient of the grant shall

1	provide matching funds in an amount that is equal
2	to the amount of the grant.
3	(2) Administration.—The recipient matching
4	funds—
5	(A) shall be derived from non-Federal
6	sources; and
7	(B) may be made in the form of in-kind
8	contributions of goods or services fairly valued.
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